Graduate Council

Number: 6
Date: February 27, 2004


Absent: L. Barrow, F. Coleman, J. Gilbert, J. Pote, C. Sides, C. Wang

Special Guests: Drs. Kay Brocato, Jeanne Swafford, College of Education; Dr. Robert Taylor, College of Engineering; Dr. Steve Turner, Agricultural Economics; Dr. Paul Grimes, Finance and Economics

1. Dr. Tom Hosie, Chair of the Graduate Council, called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. in Room 611 Allen.

2. Dr. John Boyle, noted correction to the January 30, 2004, minutes, (Page 3, Old Business, last paragraph, the addition of Dr. Hosie). On a motion by Dr. Hosie and seconded by Dr. Boyle, the Council approved the January 30, 2004, minutes with corrections.

3. Report from University Committee on Courses and Curricula (UCCC).
   a. Dr. Jeanne Swafford appeared before the Council to address questions and concerns regarding proposed modifications in the Master of Science in Elementary Education. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction proposed to change the total semester hours beyond the bachelor’s from 30 to 36 hours. The title will change from “Emphasis in Reading” to “Emphasis in Literacy,” as well as the program of study. Discussion followed.

   Dr. Boyle made the motion to approve the program modification. Dr. Dwight Hare seconded the motion to accept the Master of Science in Education program modification. There was no discussion. Motion carried.

   b. Dr. Paul Grimes, Department of Finance and Economics and Dr. Steve Turner, Department of Agricultural Economics, appeared before the Council to address questions and concerns regarding proposed modifications for the Ph.D. in Applied Economics (Agricultural Economics and Finance and Economics).

   Based on faculty assessment of the program, and in light of current resource constraints, several modifications of the current curriculum are proposed. These modifications are designed to leverage the existing synergies between the graduate programs in economics and finance and to provide students with a stronger quantitative and theoretical foundation prior to enrollment in the advanced microeconomic and macroeconomic theory courses. The proposed modifications streamline the curriculum by creating separate College of Business and Industry and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences tracks that recognize and take advantage of the differences in personnel and resource constraints in the Department of Finance and Economics and the Department of Agricultural Economics. Specifically, students entering the program through the business school will be required to earn a field of specialization in financial economics, an area currently in high demand within the market for doctoral qualified economists. In addition, the proposed changes re-sequence a number of existing courses and require the creation of only one new course. No new resources are required to implement the proposed changes.

   Dr. Wise made the motion to accept the program modification for the Ph.D. in Applied Economics in the Departments of Agricultural Economics and Finance and Economics. Dr. D’Ambro seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Motion carried.

   c. Dr. Ester Howard and Dr. Kay Brocato appeared before the Council to address questions and concerns regarding proposed modifications for the Master of Arts in Teaching – Secondary Teacher Education (Alternate Route) – MAT-S.
The Master of Arts in Teaching-Secondary Teacher Education (Alternate Route) at MSU is designed for the novice educator with a degree in a discipline area, or significant upper level coursework in a single discipline area, who wishes to prepare for a career as a professional educator. Applicants must meet the admission requirements of both the undergraduate teacher education program and the graduate program in secondary teacher education, as well as eligibility criteria for the Master of Arts in Teaching. The program of study will constitute 36 semester hours of graduate level course work. Graduates of the program will qualify for certification in a secondary field to include art, music, biology, business, chemistry, English, foreign language (French and Spanish), home economics, mathematics, physics, social studies, and physical education.

The curriculum will include courses in classroom management, assessment, technology, research, curriculum organization, instructional methodology, reading/writing across the curriculum, exceptionalities, advance content area (secondary), and a teaching internship with a seminar. When appropriate, courses will include a field-based component. Candidates who successfully complete six (6) semester hours of coursework, and who pass the Praxis I and Praxis II specialty area test, will be eligible for a Class A License, which will become a Class AA upon completion of the MAT-S program. Discussion followed.

Dr. Hosie made the motion to accept the Masters of Arts in Teaching program. Dr. Sylvia Byrd seconded the motion. A majority of the Council approved the motion.

4. Report from Graduate Studies

a. Dr. Person announced that the Graduate Coordinators' meeting will be held Wednesday, March 3, 2004, at 3:00 p.m., in Simrall Auditorium. The meeting will last no longer than one hour. The agenda will include updates on admissions, ETD, and immigration.

b. Dr. Person announced the dates for the upcoming workshops conducted by the Office of Graduate Studies. The International Teaching Assistant Workshop will be held August 3-9, 2004; General Teaching Assistant Workshop, August 11-12, 2004; Graduate Student Association Welcome Back Luncheon, August 13, 2004; New-Graduate Student Orientation, August 13, 2004, 1:30 p.m. Open registration will be held August 16-17, 2004, with classes beginning on August 18, 2004. Discussion followed.

Dr. Hosie requested that Dr. Person send the information to Academic Deans, Department Heads, and Graduate Coordinators for student planning.

5. Report from Graduate Student Association

Mr. Josh Herring, GSA Vice President, announced the 2nd Graduate Research Symposium will be held April 1, 2004, in the Union Ballroom. To date, the GSA has received 50 abstracts for the two categories for Oral and Poster presentations. The GSA is still accepting submissions. Dr. Bridges asked how students who submitted abstracts would be notified of acceptance. Mr. Herring stated the GSA would respond to students via email.

The GSA will hold the Graduate Assistant Awards Banquet on Wednesday, April 14, 2004, in the Hunter Henry Center.

6. Old Business

a. Academic Review Board Committee Representative and Alternate

Dr. Tor Schulz has agreed to serve on the Academic Review Board Committee and Dr. Richard Harkness agreed to serve as alternate. These are both two-year terms and the new expirations will be 2006. The new terms begin July 1, 2004.

Dr. Boyle made the motion to accept Dr. Tor Schulz and Dr. Richard Harkness as representatives for the Academic Review Board Committee. Dr. Larry Barrow seconded the motion. Motion carried by acclamation.
b. Dr. Hosie called on the Sub-Committee on Modification to the Graduate Bulletin and “Graduate Not Good Standing.” Dr. Boyle gave the report referring to a handout on the two issues for the Council to review for the March 26, 2004, meeting.

7. New Business

   a. Dr. Robert P. Taylor, Associate Dean of Engineering for Academic Affairs, appeared before the Council to address questions and concerns regarding proposed modification to the Programs of Study for Non-Thesis Engineering Master’s Degrees.
      
      Page 27 of the MSU Graduate Bulletin states:
      “One half of the hours of coursework on a master’s or educational specialist degree must be at the 8000 level or above, exclusive of thesis hours…if a non-thesis option is chosen, the program of study will consist of all coursework with a minimum of 30 hours."
      
      The Engineering Administrative Council has ruled that non-thesis engineering master’s degrees require a minimum of 33 hours. Since the university requires a minimum of 30 semester hours for non-thesis master’s degrees, 15 hours of 8000-level coursework on an engineering non-thesis program of study will satisfy the requirement.
      
      Dr. Hare asked why College of Engineering (ENG) was making this request. Dr. Taylor explained that most students off campus, i.e., Vicksburg, MS, and Stennis find it difficult to gather 8000 level hours because of the way the courses are offered. Dr. Boyle added to discussion regarding departments doing Directed Individual Studies. Discussion followed.
      
      Dr. Boyle suggested the University reduce the 50% requirement or put a specific hour number, example 12, which would be half the number of the 8000 level hours for a typical research directed 30 hours master’s degree and would alleviate the problem for the non-thesis student.
      
      Dr. Boyle made the motion of a 12-hour minimum of 8000 level courses. Dr. D’Ambro seconded the motion. Discussion followed. The question was raised on whether or not this issue would be a SACS accreditation concern. Discussion followed.
      
      Dr. Taylor readdressed the Council stating it would be more appropriate for the University to set minimum standards, and minimum standards have been set at 30 hours, and let the colleges, schools, departments have the autonomy to go over and above the minimum in a way that is most appropriate for that unit. Dr. Taylor stated it would be inappropriate for the Graduate Council to plan all programs. Discussion followed on minimum standard hours. Dr. Hosie clarified the thesis degree requires 24 hours coursework, six (6) hours thesis; a non-thesis degree requires a minimum of 30 hours coursework and either a three hour directed project or one additional course. Engineering would like the ability to have the one additional course at the 6000 level. Discussion followed on how 6000 and 8000 level courses are used. Dr. Lynn Reindschmidt suggested voting on Dr. Boyle’s recommendation pending SACS requirement review.
      
      Dr. Dwayne Wise made the motion to table the motion. Dr. Boyle seconded the motion. Discussion followed. The Council will re-examine the request made by Engineering on March 26, 2004.

   b. Dr. Person met with Dr. Jerry Gilbert and Dr. George Rent regarding the decrease in application fees currently received. After reviewing MSU’s peer institutions, the application fee was either the same as MSU or more. Dr. Person proposed that the graduate application fees for out-of-state and international applicants be increased to $30 effective Spring 2005. This would allow time to revise all current literature. Discussion followed.
      
      Dr. Boyle made the motion to accept the request to increase the graduate application fee for out-of-state and international applicants to $30 effective Spring 2005. Dr. Wise seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Motion carried.
      
      Dr. Boyle made the motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.